

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

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INR-10 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSF-01 OES-07
OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 OIC-02 SSO-00
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLOS
SUBJECT: LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE - OPENING SESSION

BEGIN SUMMARY.

PRESIDENT AMERASINGHE OPENED THE SEVENTH SESSIWN
OF THE LOS CONFERENCE AND TURNED THE CHAIR OVER TO THE
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT TO ENABLE THE CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS
THE PRESIDENCY QUESTION. IN A CLOSED INFORMAL SESSION
THE LATIN AMERICAN GROUP INSISTED THE PRESIDENT MUST BE
A MEMBER OF A STATE DELEGATION. THE ASIAN AND AFRICAN
GROUPS SUPPORTED AMERASINGHE'S CONTINUANCE EVEN IF HE
WAS NOT A MEMBER OF A NATIONAL DELEGATION. THE EASTERN
EUROPEAN GROUP SAID ITS SUPPORT FOR AMERASINGHE REQUIRED
A CONFERENCE CONSENSUS. THE WEO REP SAID IT FAVORED
AMERASINGHE'S CONTINUANCE BUT THIS STAND HAD NOT BEEN
REVIEWED RECENTLY. THE MEETING ADJOURNED WITHOUT A
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DECISION TO ENABLE THE REGIONAL CHAIRMEN TO CONSULT.

END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT AMERASINGHE OPENED THE SEVENTH SESSION OF
THE LOS CONFERENCE AND, NOTING THE DESIRE OF MANY OF THE
DELEGATES TO DISCUSS THE PRESIDENCY QUESTION, IMMEDIATELY

TURNED OVER THE CHAIR TO THE FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT (PAKISTAN).
HE CITED ARTICLE 9 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THIS
AUTHORITY AND THEN LEFT THE CONFERENCE ROOM.

2. FIJI SUGGESTED THAT THE CONFERENCE BE MOVED INTO CLOSED
SESSION. PERU MADE A STATEMENT OF PROCEDURAL OBJECTION FOR
THE RECORD. THE SESSION WAS THEN CONVERTED INTO AN INFORMAL
CLOSED SESSION (AT WHICH NO RECORDS ARE KEPT).

3. A CALL BY THE CHAIR FOR A POLL OF THE REGIONAL GROUP
CHAIRMEN ELICITED SUPPORT FOR AMERASINGHE BY THE ASIANS AND
AFRICANS AND OPPOSITION BY THE LATIN AMERICANS. THE ASIAN
SPOKESMAN (JAPAN) SAID HIS GROUP SUPPORTED AMERASINGHE
EVEN IF HE WAS NOT A MEMBER OF ANY DELEGATION WHILE THE
AFRICAN REP (MAURITIUS) SAID THEIR SUPPORT WAS BASED ON:
1) THE PRESIDENCY REMAINING IN THE ASIAN GROUP; 2) NO OB-
JECTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA AND A DESIRE BY
AMERASINGHE TO STAY ON. THE LATIN AMERICANS (JAMAICA)
SAID THEIR OBJECTION WAS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE
PRESIDENT MUST BE A MEMBER OF A STATE DELEGATION, ALTHOUGH
THEY AGREED THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD BE FROM THE ASIAN
GROUP. THE WEO SPOKESMAN (FINLAND) SAID HIS GROUP HAD
SUPPORTED AMERASINGHE UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS BUT HAD
NOT MET RECENTLY TO REVIEW THIS PRESENT SITUATION. THE
EASTERN EUROPEAN GROUP (USSR) HEDGED ITS SUPPORT FOR
AMERASINGHE BY INSISTING THAT HIS RETENTION BE ON THE
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BASIS OF CONSENSUS AND THE "PACKAGE DEAL" CONCEPT WITH A
CATEGORICAL OPPOSITION TO VOTING ON THIS ISSUE. ZULETA,
THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN, RESPONDED TO EE GROUP
CONCERN AND SAID SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM HAD CONSULTED
THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA (GSL) AND WAS TOLD THAT
AMERASINGHE WOULD NOT BE ON THE GSL DELEGATION BUT THERE
WAS NO OBJECTION TO HIS RETENTION OF THE LOS PRESIDENCY IN
A PERSONAL CAPACITY.

4. AFTER THE REGIONAL GROUP REPORT, THE CHAIR SUGGESTED
ADJOURNMENT IN ORDER TO MEET WITH THE REGIONAL GROUP
CHAIRMEN TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION. RICHARDSON

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SESSIWN
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